

## II

### THE PLACE OF HUMANE LETTERS IN EDUCATION

THEORIES as to the ultimate nature and aim of education have usually grouped themselves round one of two focal points. According to the first, the aim of education is the perfection of the individual soul, the cultivation of its faculties for their own sake and in due gradation of absolute value, using the external world, in so far as it does use this at all, chiefly as a means and opportunity of arriving nearer to the ultimate perfection or of rendering clearer our vision of the ultimate truth. One of the clearest expressions of this view is that given by Plato in the Republic. His scheme, as presented in the first three books and more especially in the latter part of the seventh, is that for the first seventeen years education should be chiefly occupied with music and poetry and especially with these as strengthening and ennobling the moral nature; that from seventeen to twenty should follow a period mainly devoted to physical training and roughly corresponding with the period of military service which has been common in many continental countries; from twenty to thirty come ten years' devotion to mathematical and abstract sciences—arithmetic, pure and solid geometry, astronomy treated not empirically but in its mathematical relations and regarded as of value wholly in so far as it is a mental discipline. And so these lead on to the five closing years of the university course, in which from thirty to thirty-five the student

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is devoted to what Plato calls "dialectic"—the pure metaphysical or theological study of ultimate reality and goodness. From thirty-five to fifty follows a period of public administration, "the rule", as Plato calls it, "of the philosopher king", which is not regarded as an end in itself or even as intrinsically desirable, for the soul would be better and purer without it, but rather as a repayment to the State for its cost and charges through the previous years of preparation. At fifty comes the formal discharge from public duty and for the rest of his life the "philosopher king" is allowed to occupy himself with meditation, returning only at intervals and with bitter reluctance to take his turn at the uncongenial tasks of civic life. Indeed, Plato, with one of those demure touches of humor which make him the most delightful of all philosophic writers, points out in this context that to drag the philosopher from the quiet of his study to the dust and heat of the market place is possible only by one inducement—the fear that if he refuses he will have to submit to the government of his inferiors.

There are many points of interest in the Platonic scheme. We should not press the criticism commonly and rather unthinkingly urged that the literary and the gymnastic education are relegated to separate periods of life and that in isolation they would not produce their full effect. Plato cannot have meant that there should have been no gymnastic training in the first seventeen years and no literary training in the next three. It is clear that he must have intended a balance of proportion by the complete action of which the body and its emotions should, by the age of twenty, have been brought to their highest state of discipline and control. But two points are specially to be noted. First that the education is expressly designed not for the communication of knowledge, but for the training of faculties. Plato,

indeed, states this in terms so plain as to be unmistakable. The Sophists, he says, believe that they can instill knowledge into the mind just as though a man should propose to put sight into blind eyes. True education consists of such a conversion of the whole personality that the eye which has already the potentiality of seeing may be confronted with the light. Hence it will be observed that from this scheme are excluded not only all crafts and industries and applications of science—which, indeed, so far as they existed, were held by the Greeks in some disdain—but all study of human history, of human nature, of all the numberless interests which spring up around us in the community of man and man. It is the more remarkable because one of the greatest glories of Greek literature is that provided by its historical writers and the three greatest of these had completed their work by the time that the Republic was written. The other point is that his education is confined to a special class, an aristocracy of intellect and character. In his parable of the three natures he supposes that all men have in their clay a speck of gold or silver or iron and according to this distinction their future careers shall be determined. For those who belong to the iron class no education is contemplated, except, perhaps, such training of skill and resource as is necessary for them to carry out the work by which they earn their livelihood. Those who belong to the silver class are to carry their training as far as the literary and the gymnastic stages: the higher education of science and dialectic is for the golden natures alone.

A doctrine in some respects analogous, but expressed in very different terms, may be found in some of the educational systems of the mediæval church. Its apex was theology, as that of Plato was dialectic; it was largely centred on a selected class which corresponded in more respects

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than one to Plato's Guardians, though its actual range of knowledge was very widely extended by the researches of the Jesuit order among others. The discipline of its teaching was focussed on the perfection and salvation of the individual soul. The great sentence of Cardinal Newman, "Rest in the thought of two and two only absolute and self-evident beings, myself and my Creator", may be taken as the motto and epitome of this view of religious education. Of all things in the world the individual soul is the most important; of all objects which it can pursue none is comparable with its direct relation to God. An interesting mediæval example of this ideal may be found in the Statutes drawn up by Dean Colet when he founded St. Paul's School in the early sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> An image of the Lord Jesus stood over the headmaster's chair and was saluted with a hymn at the daily opening and closing of the school. The teaching was specially designed to inculcate religion and moral virtue, great stress was laid on the elements of theology and on the Latin language, which was then the common speech of all Ecclesiastical organizations. Even in this respect it is noticeable that the authors chosen for study were not the great Classics of whom, indeed, Colet speaks with fierce disdain, but the Christian hymn writers such as Lactantius and Sedulius, the works of the Spanish priest Juvencus who turned the four Gospels into Virgilian hexameters, and the like: its furthest concession to worldly frivolity is to be found in the innocent eclogues of *Baptista Mantuanus* immortalized by the old schoolmaster in *Love's Labors Lost*. Colet includes in his course little mathematics and no science; his boys are to be kept as completely from contact with the external world as if they were in Plato's ideal

<sup>1</sup> Colet's general view may be estimated by a sentence of his quoted in Froude's *Erasmus* (page 100) to the effect that education is spoilt when lessons learnt are turned to worldly account.

city; the whole method of education is to be through "wisdom and chaste eloquence" and its whole object to fit the soul so far as possible for the presence of its Maker.

A remarkable commentary on this general view has been recently afforded in the treatise on "Self" by Mr. Archibald Weir. His position is based on the metaphysical doctrine that none of us can be sure in this world of any reality except his own self, that he has no certain knowledge of any self other than his own, that the development of this self is, therefore, the one aim and object of his existence, and that though the fact of our life involves us in social conditions which we are compelled to treat as though they were real, yet our attitude towards them must be that they are but the whetstones on which the blade of our own spirit is sharpened. Life, according to Mr. Weir, is one long process of self-discipline and this discipline involves, as he says, "a precedence of self over the claims of society". Three of his quotations throw a very interesting light on the implications of this doctrine. One is the passage from Newman which has been cited above and which he places upon his title page; the second is the story of Similis, the Roman official who, "after a most honourable and active career, was retired by the Emperor Hadrian on the score of age." He lived on in private life until he was able to claim the epitaph "Here lies Similis, an old man who has lived seven years". The third is a passage of Plotinus in which he meets those who would maintain the loneliness of the spirit of man in such a world. "There is no possibility of concealing", he replies, "that the self's goal is, in the language of Plotinus, in a life without love of the world a flight of the Alone to the Alone".

It is not, I suppose, necessary to point out that this doctrine is very far removed from what is commonly called

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selfishness. That, indeed, is the antithesis and opposite of Mr. Weir's ideal, for it essentially implies a constant relation to an outside world of material *desiderata*, that lowest form of apprehension which we share with the animals. From this it is as far removed as in Aristotle's doctrine the lower form of *philautia*, which aims at wealth or power, from the higher kind which aims at filling the true self of man with its appropriate nurture of noble deeds and pure contemplation.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, this doctrine, in some form or another, has been held by a large number of saints and mystics; it cannot be lightly dismissed or set aside; it takes a high view of man's place in his destiny and therefore of the nature of that education through which his place can be maintained and his destiny fulfilled. But it is only fair to set against this in direct contrariety the theory of education which emphasizes its practical and administrative aim. According to this second view, we are sent into this world not to cultivate our own souls, not to find at once our duty and reward in mystic contemplation, but to help as best we can towards solving its problems, healing its miseries and strengthening its efforts. So far from our depreciating the reality of other selves, it says, in spite of metaphysics, that they are of greater importance even than our own. It is not affrighted by the phrase about gaining the whole world and losing one's own soul, for its motive is not gain, but service. The ideal which it sets before itself is to do what comes to its hand for the amelioration of those lots among which it is cast, and, whether its circle of operation be the family, or the city, or the nation at large, it finds the fulfillment of its being not in the striving towards perfection but in the active and operative exercises of its powers on objects

<sup>1</sup> See Aristotle's *Ethics*, IX, viii, and compare Bishop Butler's Sermon (No. xi) on Self-love and the love of our neighbour.

outside itself. No one has ever put this more succinctly than the King of Brobdignag in Swift's allegory who held that all accumulation of knowledge for its own sake is of far less account than its exercise for the benefit of others, and that the greatest benefactor of mankind was the man who made two ears of corn grow where but one grew before. After all, we have Shakespearian warrant for saying that

If our virtues went not forth of us  
It were all one as though we had them not.

We may find some traces of this doctrine as far back as Aristotle, for although Aristotle was too much of a Greek to lose sight of personal perfection and of the infinite value of the individual soul, he was also too good a citizen to under-value or to disallow the work which every man should do for the society which he helps to constitute. All through the *Ethics* we are reminded that human happiness consists, not in the possession of high qualities, but in their active and prolonged exercise, and one fundamental difference between his contemplative life and the beatific vision of Plato's Guardians is that Aristotle's philosopher willingly remains in the world and performs his civic duties without constraint and without reluctance.<sup>1</sup>

I have dwelt on the distinction between these two ideals—the ideal of self-perfection and that of active service—because they must affect in some measure the content of any educational system. Yet here we should be careful not to state as absolute what is really a matter of relative proportion. In every true career both elements must be present: without the spiritual culture man would faint and fail in his efforts at public service, or, what is worse, might be

<sup>1</sup> See Aristotle's *Ethics*, X, viii, 6: one of the most important passages in Greek moral philosophy.

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warped or poisoned by sordid and unworthy aims; without the wholesome and bracing contact of practical life the mystic has sometimes tended to "lose himself in an *o altitudo*", or even as we find in the stories of some ascetics, to impair the natural balance and equipoise of his faculties. It is significant that both schools of thought can claim the example of our Lord by taking a partial and imperfect view of His work. To the one He was the standing challenge of the self against the world, the typical example of the soul which is entirely occupied in communion with God: to the other, and it has equal ground for its belief, His mission was, in St. Peter's phrase, "to go about doing good", and that an essential part of His work is consummated in the functions of teacher and of healer.

Now it is clear that in proportion as we emphasize the former of these two ideals, in such proportion shall we magnify the place which should be occupied in education by the culture of humane letters. For the function of these is above all things to bring the soul into direct contact with the best and the noblest thought of all ages and in such a way to afford it that training and that discipline by which its highest attributes would be best developed. This is not to deny or depreciate the value as discipline and training of the mathematical and physical sciences; they exercise an invaluable influence in making our thought secure and exact; but it is no paradox to say that a large part of their domain is occupied with the imparting of actual knowledge which can be turned to practical account. The engineer, the electrician, the metallurgist in one sphere, in another the physician, the surgeon, the bacteriologist are all acquiring and using knowledge which is of immediate practical value, and it is obvious that their education must be in some degree determined by the requisition that they should meet the



needs which these sciences exist to fulfill. While, therefore, all the sciences have their respective values as forms of mental discipline, all those which we roughly classify as natural—and to which we sometimes rather arrogantly appropriate the name of science—have both in their purpose and in their preparation, a direct reference to that external world, a mastery over which is, as Bacon tells us, one of the rewards of education. But for those who are going to follow active pursuits, who are preparing for practical careers, there is still much opportunity for training in the humanities, and the nature and limits of this opportunity we may now proceed to discuss.

I put this forward with the more freedom because of the two educational ideals I profess myself to be on the whole an adherent of the second. Charles Kingsley once said in his blunt way that religion was not “a set of soul-saving dodges”, and in like manner we may hold that we are not fulfilling the real purpose for which we exist by bringing each his own soul to the highest possible pitch of cultivation, but by augmenting the happiness and advancing the progress of the generation to which we belong. Such a view easily lends itself to burlesque. Everyone, for example, who has any ambition to help others should constantly keep in mind Dickens’ caricature of the hard-faced, tough-hided philanthropist without sympathy, without gentleness, without real kindness of heart, who goes about her business as mechanically as a Prussian drill-sergeant, sowing disturbance and reaping cordial dislike.<sup>1</sup> Another example, less well-known than it deserves, runs through a story by Mr. W. J. Locke. The hero, a man of wealth, ability, and position, is told by his doctor that he has an incurable disease and that there are only six months of life left to him. He takes the blow

<sup>1</sup> See *Bleak House*, Chapter VIII.

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with philosophic courage, devotes the six months to the service of his friends, helping their fortunes and their love affairs with most disinterested sympathy, and with the result that when, at the end of the six months, an operation following on a new surgical discovery restores him to health and strength, he has mismanaged every life which he has touched and stands alone amid the wreckage without a friend left in the world. But these are parodies which do not really touch the essential truth. The life of public service is not necessarily officious or sentimental; it may have no more ambitious an ideal than that of doing the next job that comes to hand and of so equipping ourselves for this purpose that we can see the object in its true relations and estimate with reasonable probability the effect of our action upon it. Indeed, the wrong kind of service, miscalled by that lamentable name philanthropy, may often be no better than a particularly unsuccessful species of self-cultivation. Some years ago, when it was a momentary fashion that leaders of London society should pay hasty and sporadic visits to the East-end that they might there indulge in that cheapest of all forms of beneficence which consists in giving, one of them was rebuked by a tenement dweller in words which every philanthropic institution would do well to take to heart: "Why", she said indignantly, "must you come here to wipe your souls clean on us?"

The ideal of service, in short, is to be approached only as we depart from self-consciousness and ostentation. Even the sense of power, which is, perhaps, the most intimate of all our feelings, has no place here. The sole admissible desire is that the right thing should be done without any regard as to who does it and still less who gets the credit for it. And because some natural impulses of selfishness and vanity are inherent in human nature, together with our

other undesirable tendencies, it is above all things advisable that our education should be such as to eliminate these and to leave us with that clear and dispassionate vision which, as the painters say, "has its eye on the object". While, therefore, I do not decry, but omit for the moment as irrelevant, that side of our educational system which aims at the accumulation of knowledge, I should like to emphasize as briefly as I can the very important part which, even in the world of affairs, can be taken by the study of pure letters.

If a man sets before himself the ideal of service with the hope, I do not say of success, but of reasonable efficiency, it is a prime necessity that he should begin by taking his bearings. Much depends upon his maintaining a right proportion between self and circumstance, between claims and duties, between his own capacities and the occasions of their exercise. Sometimes a man fails through diffidence, or hangs back in undue self-depreciation: like Aristotle's "man of little soul", who cramps and impedes his actions from a motive which is really timidity masquerading as humbleness. Far more common is the opposite error, that of the man who "has too much ego in his cosmos", who sees his own powers and his own possessions apparelled in a celestial light which does not shine with equal lustre upon his neighbourhood. Everything which directly relates to himself—family, wealth, virtue, achievement—is set by him in a false perspective; they stand so near to him that they block out the view beyond. Such a man must always be at the height of the fashion, at the front of the movement: he is not content that good should be done unless he has a visible hand in doing it and a visible share in the renown which it brings. To both these men, and especially to the latter, the study of great history and of great literature is an

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invaluable corrective. The chief problems of human life, though they may differ widely in the manner of their presentation, are throughout the ages fundamentally the same: we shall best preserve our sanity and our sense of proportion in dealing with them if we learn how they have been met and solved by the men who have preceded us. Everyone of us is tempted to think that his own experience is unique—that the like of it has never happened before, or that at least it has gained a special significance by happening to him. He will have acquired one of the most profound of all truths when he has realized that he is one private soldier in an innumerable army and that it is of far more importance that he should hold the post assigned to him than that he should dream dreams about a field-marshal's bâton in his knapsack.

But the value of great literature is not only that it teaches us to know our place and to maintain this without either belittling or magnifying: it is of still greater consequence in that it strengthens and clarifies our judgment. That we should look at life dispassionately is not enough, though this is the first condition of our looking at it steadily; truth is not so easy of attainment that it comes for the mere wishing; on the contrary, it is the reward of careful search and of faculties alert and well equipped. To such an end the classical writers of all countries make priceless contribution. They set before us our own difficulties, almost as we might state them ourselves, and they treat them with a large and luminous wisdom which, by the very attraction of sympathy, lifts and ennobles our minds; they leave us not with some external and superimposed decision which dominates our personality but with our power stimulated and our understanding enriched so that by their aid we can see with

keener vision and decide with a wider and more humane intelligence.

"Consider", says Emerson, "what you have in the smallest well-chosen library. A company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be picked out of all countries in a thousand years have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. The men themselves were hid and inaccessible, solitary, impatient of interruption, fenced by etiquette; but the thought that they did not uncover to their bosom friend is here written out in transparent words to us, the strangers of another age". And again, for particular example, "Go with mean people and you think life is mean. Then read Plutarch and the world is a proud place, peopled with men of positive quality, with heroes and demigods standing round us who will not let us sleep".<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the testimony is all but universal. Hobbes in his paradoxical fashion may tell us that "if he had read as many books as other men he would be as ignorant as they", but the support of Hobbes is like that of Pharaoh "upon which if a man lean it will go into his hand and pierce him". Goethe was the wisest man of his generation, and the most widely read; so was Johnson, so in a very different sphere was Aquinas, and the philosopher whose judgment, on almost every practical question in life, has stood four-square for over a couple of thousand years, is celebrated among us, in Dante's phrase, as "the master of those who know".

Thirdly, the study of fine literature, and especially of the great poets, affords permanent food and sustenance to our sense of beauty. The melody and cadence of noble verse, the poignant phrase which drives to the very centre of the thought and fixes it in our minds as a possession forever, the close communion through which the poet's imagination

<sup>1</sup> Emerson, essay on Books in *Society and Solitude*.

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touches our own and kindles it as with a coal from the altar—all these are sacramental means of initiation into the deeper mysteries. The world would be a colder and bleaker place for us if we could not be moved to the heart by the serenity of Sophocles, the tenderness of Virgil, the white fervor of Dante, the perfection of Racine: by Shakespeare's orchestra and Milton's organ-voice and the intimate string-music of Wordsworth. The spirit to which they appeal is an essential element of our nature, and the satisfaction of its need is requisite not only as a means of self-cultivation but as an enhancement of our natural activities. For this reason I would urge that the learning of great poetry should be an essential part of all education: particularly in childhood, when the memory is most fresh and plastic, but continued in due measure through later years. It not only trains and tempers the character, it supplies us with an enduring treasury of beauty and delight.<sup>1</sup>

Before leaving this subject I should like to offer one more point for consideration. And although what I have to say is a counsel of perfection, an ideal which none of us can hope to attain, I am none the less serious in proposing it as a goal to which we should approach so far as our conditions allow. It is, no doubt, true that the literature with which we are most concerned is that of our own people. For one reason, this literature most closely reflects the nature of our own thought and the progress of our own civilization. For another it is expressed in a language with the refinements and resources of which we are specially familiar: which we know from inside, as only a chosen few can know the speech of any other age or nation. Boileau, in an amusing satire, imagines a dispute between Horace and the

<sup>1</sup> For all this see the essay on Poetry and Imagination in Emerson's *Letters and Social Aims*.

Parisian *littérateurs* who were forming their language in the reign of Louis XIV. At every step the Roman poet falls into some blunder, using French words and phrases which could be justified according to the dictionary, but which in current usage were solecisms. At every step they correct him—one does not say “la rive” “but “le bord” of a river-bank, one does not say “la cité” when one means “la ville de Paris” and so forth. Horace accepts their criticism, for indeed he cannot do otherwise, and ends the discussion with an ironic hope that they will desist from an equally hopeless attempt to write verses in Latin. All this is legitimate satire; it only emphasizes the deeper truth that if we wish to reap the full harvest of a foreign literature we should read it in the language in which it was written. There are very few translations—the Authorized Version of the Bible is the most notable—which do not lose something of the quality and fragrance of the original: they give us the substance of the thought but not the special beauty and appropriateness of its form. “A very pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer”, was the judgment of Bentley, and his decision may be taken to cover even such marvels as Coleridge’s “Wallenstein”, Conington’s “Persius”, and Murray’s “Euripides”. In saying this, I do not depreciate the extraordinary skill which these writers have exhibited: I plead only that to reproduce the full tone and cadence of the original version is a task as impossible as to transcribe without loss of balance a sonata of Beethoven for the orchestra or a song of Schubert for the pianoforte.

Indeed, the reason may be given in terms of Music. No two languages employ precisely the same instrument, and no two instruments have precisely the same harmonics. What is the English for “Ich grolle nicht” or “Si tu veux,

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faisons un rêve", or "e il naufrager è dolce in questo mare" or a thousand other magical lines and phrases? How far is "a young man void of understanding" represented by "un jeune homme dépourvu de bon sens", or "Absent thee from felicity awhile" by "Verbanne doch dich von der Seligkeit"? And when to this is added that all nations look at poetry from their own angles, and that no two angles are coincident, it follows that the difficulty of transference from one to another is almost insuperable. Racine is one of the greatest of all dramatic poets. How often do we see him on the stage of any English-speaking people?

It will be seen, therefore, that I advocate the study of languages not so much for their colloquial use—though there is a great deal to be said on that score—as because they admit us to the inner sanctuaries of literature which otherwise we can contemplate only from the outer courts. And because, in the words of a wise physician, "Art is long and life is short": because not all of us have the gift of tongues or the leisure for their acquisition, it follows that we must make some choice, contented with the second best in some directions if we can attain the best in others. What then shall be our choice for the period of formal education? French and German stand near to us and have great literary histories, but if we dig our foundations deeper we may acquire at least a reader's knowledge of them in after life. Italian and Spanish have wonderful gifts of melody, and some of the first names in modern literature: their doors are open to all who have special predilection or special opportunity. Latin, the measure of a pure and exact style, is the tongue of Lucretius and Virgil and Ovid, of Catullus, Propertius, Horace, of Cicero and Livy and Tacitus: if we may have two languages we cannot do without Latin. But if we are to select one which is supreme as a vehicle of



human thought, which is almost infinitely rich, flexible and sonorous, and which in the few hundred years of its prosperity embodied a literature which is by all acknowledgment incomparable, I would suggest, even in these days of apostasy, to plead that its ancient honour should be restored to Greek. It has an inherent splendour which even the bungling mispronunciation of later times has not been able to tarnish or overlay. As the inflected speech of a sensitive and artistic people it is filled with problems of rhythm and order and construction, and thus calls into play those gifts of observation and analysis which we continuously associate with the domain of science. And it has this high educational advantage that its masterpieces of literature are not confined to its more difficult and remote fields of study, but meet us with an open welcome from the very beginning of our course. Four of the most entrancing stories in the world are written in a simple and lucid Greek, the structure of which is transparent and the idiom easily acquired: from them, as travelers at a first landing we can proceed through an enchanted region in which every step brings us new opportunities of noble adventure and delight. It is not too much to say that the study of Greek is in itself a liberal education; that it unlocks a treasure house of poetry and practical wisdom and philosophic insight, of humour and pathos, of tragedy and romance, of religious fervour and scientific exactitude, to which even our own great literature cannot afford a parallel. America has, during recent years, borne a noble part in educational reform: the revival of Greek learning would add an imperishable laurel to her renown.

It must not be forgotten that I am here speaking about one aspect alone of education: that I am not entering upon that vast domain of discovery and research which is set

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on the conquest of nature and for which our schools and colleges must in part be the training grounds. To that I pay all honour and would give all opportunity. I am speaking of that kind of education which enables us to take a large and sympathetic view of human nature, to understand its conditions and its problems, and, so far as we have capacity, to help in solving or ameliorating them. It is the education of "one who loves his fellowmen" that I have chiefly in view; its aim is to equip him with wisdom and humour and a sense of perspective that he may play his part among his fellows without misgiving, without ostentation, and without thought of personal reward. For this I am convinced that the best foundation is the study of great literature, our own first, others in order as we can reach them: we are not sufficient for ourselves, we need the comradeship and encouragement of the great minds that are openly at our disposal. And let no one meet me with a rejoinder about scanty time, and the overcrowded curriculum and the overburdened life. There is not a school or college upon this earth which cannot, if it will, develop a taste for good literature; there is not a free man or woman who cannot devote an hour a day to reading, and these hours wisely spent will aggregate into a total of inestimable value. The real hindrance to our progress is not insufficient time but time misspent: wasted over mean books and ephemeral topics and transitory interests. We need be satisfied with nothing short of the very best: it lies at our hand in ready abundance, and the touchstone by which we may try it is to be found in the noble words with which Ruskin sums up the aim and purpose of education: "God appoints to every one of His creatures a separate mission, and if they discharge it honourably, if they quit themselves like men, and faithfully follow the light which is in them, withdrawing

from it all cold and quenching influence, there will assuredly come of it such burning as, in its appointed mode and measure, shall shine before men, and be of service constant and holy. Degrees infinite of lustre there must always be, but the weakest among us has a gift, however seemingly trivial, which is peculiar to him, and which, worthily used, will be a gift also to his race for ever."

#### NOTE

Plato's theory of education as intended primarily for the culture and development of a privileged class has received in modern times a convergent support from an ally whom its author would probably have regarded with some misgiving. The whole doctrine of Nietzsche's "Lectures on the Future of Educational Institutions" is to the effect that education is degraded by being turned to active public service, and that its whole aim should be the perfecting of those chosen minds which he calls sometimes "the lonely ones" and sometimes "the few select ones". This view, like the rest of Nietzsche's philosophy, can most readily be understood if we remember that he first made his reputation with an essay on Theognis of Megara, the most uncompromising Tory aristocrat in literature, and that his entire view of life is taken from this standpoint. His chief objection to Christianity, for example, was that it was based on compassion for the weak and the suffering.

With this may be contrasted a far nobler statement of education as primarily cultural in Newman's lectures on "The Ideal of a University". Newman delivered these in 1852 when English philosophy was still preponderantly utilitarian, and he therefore emphasizes very strongly the value of knowledge for purposes of mental discipline rather

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than for purposes of practical equipment, but throughout he endeavors to hold a balance between knowledge for its own sake and knowledge as qualifying its possessor to be a useful member of society. He gives in Discourse 8 an admirable picture of the type of character which he wishes to foster and encourage, and in a famous passage of the introduction he tells us that "when the Church founds a University she is not cherishing talent, genius, or knowledge for their own sakes, but for the sake of her children, with a view to their spiritual welfare and their religious influence and usefulness—with the object of training them to fill their respective posts in life better and of making them more intelligent, capable, active members of society". This is a conclusion on which it would seem that all conflicting schools can meet and join hands.